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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 004439

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: ITALY: EU PRESIDENCY WILL WORK TO DISSUADE EU REP  
ATTENDANCE AT MIAMI CONFERENCE ON CUBA

REF: STATE 273921

CLASSIFIED BY: POL M/C T. COUNTRYMAN, REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D)

1. (C) POL M/C AND POLOFF MET WITH MFA CENTRAL AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES OFFICE DIRECTOR, NICOLO GORETTI AND MFA LATIN AMERICA EU LEAD MINISTER GIULIO CESARE PICCIRILLI AND DELIVERED POINTS (REF) ON KARL BURK'S PLANS TO ATTEND THE NATIONAL SUMMIT ON CUBA. POL M/C STATED THAT IT WAS UNFORTUNATE THAT THIS ISSUE SHOULD ARISE DURING A TIME OF INCREASED COOPERATION AND AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE US AND THE EU ON CUBAN ISSUES. HE STRESSED THE INAPPROPRIATENESS OF BURK'S PARTICIPATION WHICH AMOUNTS TO DIRECT INTERFERENCE IN A DOMESTIC US POLITICAL DEBATE. POL M/C MADE THE HYPOTHETICAL ANALOGY OF THE USG SENDING A GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL TO SWEDEN TO LOBBY FOR A 'NO' ON THE EURO REFERENDUM.

2) (C) PICCIRILLI LED THE RESPONSE INDICATING THAT THE MFA HAD ALREADY RECEIVED COMMUNICATION FROM GENERAL DIRECTOR ORTONA ON HIS SEPTEMBER 24 DISCUSSION WITH WHA DAS DERHAM AND THAT HE UNDERSTOOD AND RECOGNIZED THE VALIDITY OF OUR POSITION. HE ALSO STATED THAT HE HAD PERSONALLY DISCUSSED THE ISSUE WITH BUCK IN AN ATTEMPT TO DISSUADE HIM FROM ATTENDING THE EVENT. BUCK STILL INSISTED ON ATTENDING SAYING HE WOULD GO IN A PERSONAL RATHER THAN EU CAPACITY. POL M/C SAID "PERSONAL CAPACITY" WAS POSSIBLE AT A CLOSED ACADEMIC SEMINAR BUT NOT AT AN OPEN POLITICAL RALLY. HE URGED PICCIRILLI TO KEEP TRYING TO DISSUADE BUCK, MAKING CLEAR THAT PARTICIPATION WOULD IN FACT BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE TO BUCK'S OBJECTIVES.

3. (C) PICCIRILLI STATED THAT HE WILL WORK WITH BUCK AND HIS SUPERVISORS AND REQUESTED THE NAMES OF PEOPLE IN BRUSSELS WHO USEU HAD ALREADY APPROACHED REGARDING THIS ISSUE. POL M/C AGREED TO FORWARD THIS INFORMATION SOONEST. PICCIRILLI EXPRESSED READINESS TO HAVE THE EU PRESIDENCY (ITALY) RAISE THIS MATTER THROUGH FORMAL CHANNELS WITH THE SECRETARIAT IF NECESSARY. HOWEVER, THIS WOULD RAISE MANY UNTESTED AND UNCOMFORTABLE PROCEDURAL ISSUES. THE GOI WOULD STRONGLY PREFER TO SOLVE THE ISSUE THROUGH LESS FORMAL APPROACHES BY THE USG AND GOI GOING PROGRESSIVELY UP BUCK'S SUPERVISORY CHAIN.

4. (C) POL M/C ALSO RAISED THE ISSUE AT AN EARLIER MEETING WITH MFA MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS AND HUMAN RIGHTS ASSISTANT DIRECTOR GENERAL CLAUDIO BISOGNERO WHO ASSURED POL M/C THAT THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE DIRECTORATE AT MFA WAS ALREADY SEIZED WITH THE SITUATION.

5. (C) FOLLOW-UP: MFA UNDERSTANDS THAT ASSISTANT SECRETARY NORIEGA MAY CALL AMBASSADOR VENTO ABOUT THIS ISSUE. POST REQUESTS INFORMATION FROM USEU ON WHICH OFFICIALS HAVE ALREADY BEEN APPROACHED. POST AND MFA WILL EXCHANGE FURTHER IDEAS ON MONDAY ON HOW TO PREVENT BUCK'S ATTENDANCE.  
SEMBLER

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